

GEAR UP Kentucky TWO

Standards for a College-going Culture

AWARENESS—providing counseling and information for students about the value of postsecondary education, pre-college preparation, college admissions requirements, costs and financial aid.

RIGOR—ensuring that all students have access to rigorous coursework; improving teaching practices; and enriching instruction

ENGAGEMENT—involving parents in setting high expectations for students and providing information about college planning.

ACCESS—ensuring that no student is denied college for financial reasons, and providing information about financial aid and planning.

SUPPORT—preventing students from failing by providing academic and developmental support.

- GEAR UP Kentucky Standards for a College-going Culture are a set of core standards that help guide school efforts in fostering an environment of success and high achievement. These *standards* are based on activities defined within five *strategic priority areas*, and recognize that disadvantaged and low-income students must be intentionally nurtured to prevent failure. These standards are aligned with Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement (SISI) and reflect commonalities between GEAR UP and federal and state requirements.
- Participating schools adopt the *GEAR UP Kentucky Standards for a College-going Culture* and target an area of improvement to address over a two-year period. GEAR UP provides supplemental funds through a mini-grant process and help schools with college partners for additional instructional resources.
- Middle schools begin working with their high school counterparts immediately upon participating in the program to ensure students' transition from middle school is successful and that "*all high school students graduate with the education, skills, and knowledge necessary to succeed in postsecondary education and in a globally competitive economy.*" (Excerpt: President Bush's High School Initiative).

*What are the
GEAR UP
Kentucky
standards for a
college-going
culture?*

What Schools Will Get—

The Council will provide GEAR UP funds to provide a range of services for students and school personnel by expanding or creating new activities to foster a college-going culture in schools. Services will be coordinated with other efforts in schools, colleges and universities, KDE and local community organizations. GEAR UP has targeted the following areas in which to provide professional development opportunities for school personnel:

- Leadership skills development—intentional planning and alignment between multiple programs designed to meet the same goals in schools
- Leadership coaching—cultivating effective leadership teams to create change in schools
- Collaboration/facilitation skills—teachers working with teachers in vertical teams and with peers
- Curriculum alignment—resources, assistance in creating the means for middle school students to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for success in rigorous high school coursework

GEAR UP KENTUCKY PRIORITY AREAS

Awareness	✓
Rigor	✓
Engagement	✓
Access	✓
Support	✓

What All Students Will Get

GEAR UP Kentucky host institutions will ensure that entire cohorts of students have access to *essential activities*, beginning at the seventh grade level. GEAR UP Kentucky essential activities are as follows:



- College Awareness—priority focused on Internet resources from the Go-HigherKy web portal and college EXPO's
- Campus Visits
- Skills Assessments —(EXPLORE (7/8th grade), PLAN (9/10th grade) and ACT (11th grade)
- Academic planning and guidance about college preparatory coursework
- College planning—information and counseling about financial aid, college admissions, and applications
- Academic and developmental support such as developmental instruction, mentoring, outreach

Priority Activities

The following activities will be designed and delivered with a cohort-wide focus. Participating schools must ensure all students have access to activities and should facilitate participation by students, parents and school personnel as appropriate:

- **Awareness:** *Newspaper in Education Program*, established student accounts on the GoHigher Kentucky web portal, career-college EXPO's
- **Rigor and School Improvement Support:** Individual student-level assessments, *Common Ground Institute* (for school personnel)
- **Engagement:** Development of small communities of parents, college access summit
- **Access:** Financial aid information and workshops, including *College-goal Sundays*, personalized 21st Century Scholars certificates (for students)
- **Support:** Annual academic advising conferences—students and parents, systematic use of web-based academic planners



What Schools Must Do—

- Adopt the GEAR UP Kentucky *Standards for College-going Culture* as the standard for school leadership behavior, and require teaching practices that ensure all students complete middle school ready to succeed in rigorous coursework in high school.
- Create a GEAR UP site team that meets periodically with GEAR UP site staff to plan, monitor and review school participation in program.
- Identify one school staff member to act as the GEAR UP liaison, sharing information between the principal, GEAR UP staff, other school personnel, students and parents.
- Assist with logistics of participation by *targeted students* in early intervention activities provided by host institutions—including selection, documentation and permissions for students.
- Assist with logistics of student participation in early intervention activities (by *cohorts*).
- Assist GEAR UP staff with planning/developing small community of parents to help outreach with other parents in the school.
- Make it possible for the GEAR UP site team to participate in planned professional development, annual institutes and quarterly follow-up activities.
- Provide in-kind matching funds toward the grant—E.g. PD, support services and transportation for students.

